

# EUROBESITY

December 2021

magazine

**EUROPEAN  
PATIENT  
ADVOCACY  
SUMMIT  
2021**

**REPRESENTATIVE SPOTLIGHT**

**CHRISTMAS IN MY COUNTRY**

EASO

**ECPO**



# WELCOME



**Welcome to our EurObesity end of year magazine.**

This edition sees our ECPO & Urhealth4life team bring together some reflections on the past year which make us proud of all our ECPO council members, and in awe of the tremendous advocacy work they are achieving across Europe in their organisations.

When I joined the EASO patient council (now ECPO), the first working group I joined was the Urhealth4 life team alongside Solveig.

I was unsure of what the work would entail and had so much to learn. But now, years later, I love getting started on each new edition we create and hearing the positive feedback from those who read and share our work.

COVID-19 continues to cause disruption, worry and challenges for us all. Despite this however, advocacy efforts have not been derailed. There have been a record number of online webinars and meetings this year, and we still hear those famous words regularly “You are on MUTE!”

We don’t often see the tremendous work done in the background.

Meetings that take place at odd hours to facilitate time zones. Back-to-back Zoom or Teams meetings that give little time for a break for our advocates.

I look forward to working towards us strengthening our combined voice in 2022 as ECPO grows and expands.

I am proud to be a part of such an amazing group of people who inspire me every day, and I look forward to hopefully meeting face to face in the year ahead.

*Susie Birney*  
ECPO Secretariat

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**Cover photo:** Bryndís Inga Haraldsdóttir  
**Model:** Bjargey Ingólfssdóttir



**Vicki Mooney**  
Executive Director, ECPO



Am I the only one who cannot believe it is Christmas already?

What a whirlwind year, with so many highlights but with its challenges and setbacks, yet with glimmers of hope for some sort of normality to return.

A year of zoom fatigue and burnout for many. However, in spite of that, we discovered new ways to communicate and to build on our resilience whilst continuing to reach out to our community who need our support the most.

Reflecting on 2021 gives me renewed hope for 2022.

I do believe this past year was more demanding than 2020, this cycle within the pandemic has taken its toll on ourselves and our colleagues, patients and people. Nevertheless, I believe we've now harnessed a new way of adapting to our

ever-changing situations, which helps us become more versatile and open for what comes next in this ever-changing world.

I also believe our community of advocates and collaborators from what is now 30 countries across Europe, have grown from strength to strength. We've watched patient organisations launch and grow in 2021.

We've seen social media engagement flourish across Europe. We are proud to have collaborated on Europe's first ever image bank for people with overweight and obesity while working with national restrictions during Covid.

We've engaged, participated, co-created and raised up the patient voice, not just on a European scale, but on the global stage.

We've put into motion our plans for face-to-face events in February and May of 2022, and that gives us further hope of returning as a community and empowering each other, sharing best practice and building the community.

In this edition you will find some of the exceptional advocate and organisational experiences, so much passionate work, and a candid showing of resilience from advocates across Europe.

You'll find images of the winter and Christmas season across various countries, and I hope, that within this edition of the magazine, you will see the "embers of hope" for 2022 from this outstanding team.

# European Obesity Patient Advocacy Summit

ANDREAS HERDT



**I**t has been more than two years since international patient representatives met in a larger circle in 2019 for the ECPO Development Masterclass in Barcelona.

Two years that were different than every year before. Depending on the country, the pandemic restrictions were more or less severe, but everyone was affected, especially in terms of in-person meetings.

So here they were, patient representatives from 12 countries, with a wide variety of experiences. Established organisations, young organisations and patients without an organisation were represented. How do you do justice to that?

We tried to offer a menu of different topics, like community building, funding or advocacy, so that there would be something for everyone. One challenge was not to overwhelm the inexperienced participants and at the same time not to bore the experienced ones. To this end, established organisations were given the opportunity to share successful projects with the others and to inspire them. In addition, there were opportunities in breakout sessions, to benefit from each other's different experiences.

We were supported by volunteers from our circle, who facilitated with good understanding of our needs for a Patient Advocacy Summit.

Despite the tight programme, there was time for breaks and joint lunches and dinners to deepen the exchange with each other. As I used to say: The magic happens at the breaks!

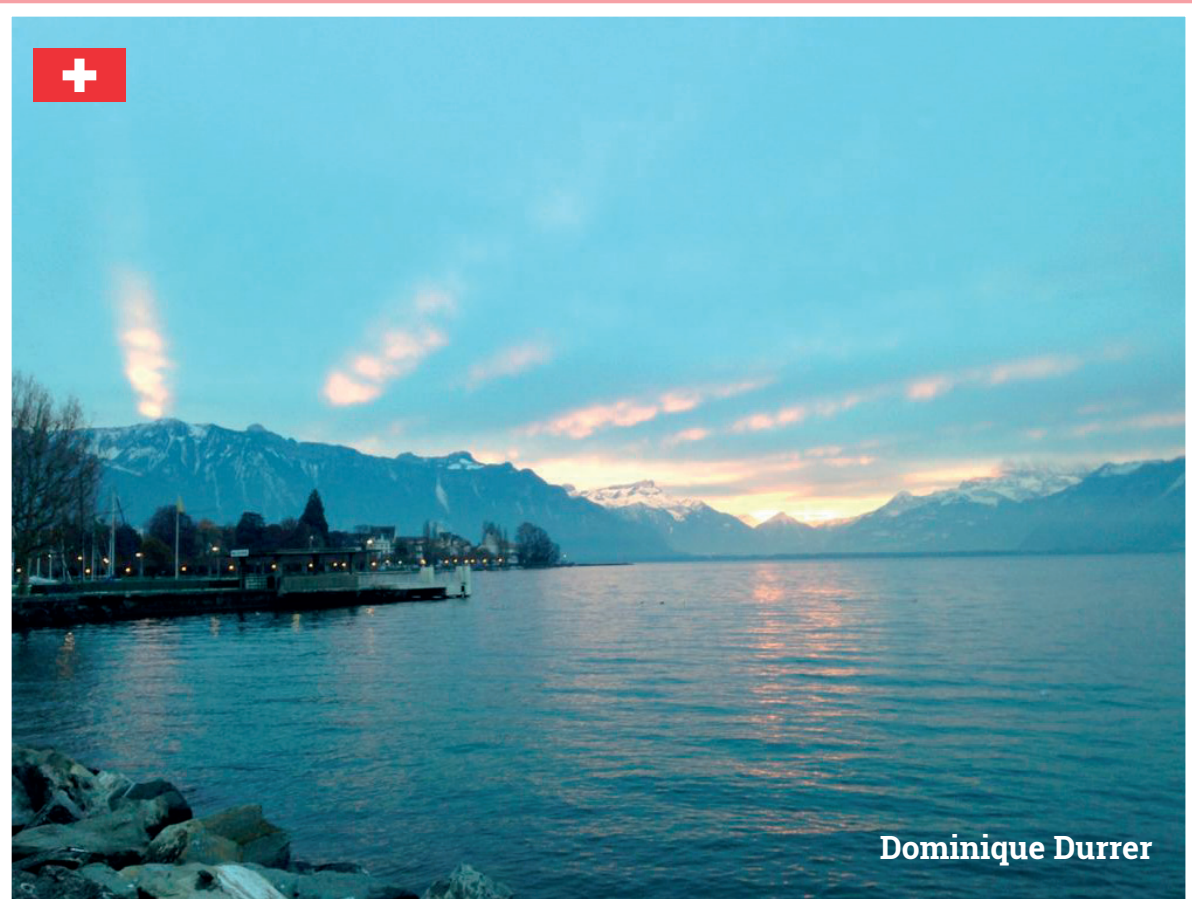
Something that will certainly need more space in the future. I think everyone enjoyed this form of togetherness, which simply cannot be replaced by video conferences.

Let's hope that we will soon regain more of this old normality!





# CHRISTMAS IN MY COUNTRY





# THE NETHERLANDS



**F**irst of all, we would like to thank everyone for giving us this amazing opportunity to write our story for Eurobesity.

**As a brand-new association, we are hoping to bring new life to advocacy of people living with obesity in the Netherlands with a kick-off in 2022!**

My journey began a few years ago.

Working as a clinical researcher at the bariatric surgery department I was in close contact with many of my patients.

Every day the outpatient clinic was filled with different stories of the struggles of living with obesity, from small inconveniences such as being physically troubled with putting on socks, to serious problems such as facing discrimination at work.

Slowly, but steadily realizing the severe problem of under-representation and the stigmatization of people living with obesity in our own healthcare system and our society.

As a Ph.D. specialized in metabolism, gut-brain axis and gut microbiome in human obesity, I believe science to be essential in being able to help understand the underlying causes of obesity, and finding novel treatments, other than lifestyle interventions or surgery.

I want to create an environment where there is a safe space to express yourself, but also a place where new collaborations can take place!

Bringing our people with obesity together, and helping them represent themselves when talking to healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical companies, and the government is essential for national change.

Together with our amazing board members: Natasja Wijling, Erman Akpinar and Wouter Roosink we want to bring change!

Every one of us has a different background and expertise which we believe to be our strength in creating something new!

Meet our team:

Wouter Roosink, board member NVOO

As a physician-assistant working in the field of abdominal surgery, I see and treat many people after bariatric surgery. I've noticed

the importance of having a social support system for my patients. Having peer support can positively change the experience for a patient.

Currently, there are many small online communities that misinform or mistreat their members. In my day-to-day work in this field, I see that our patients lack a support group to fall back upon when struggling.

At the moment, there is no room or opportunity to share experiences or contact one another for support when facing problems or struggles. Especially in the current digital period it is very important to maintain that social interaction. Therefore, I want to help re-creating a safe environment for our community, and help in providing evidence-based information.

Natasja Wijling, board member NVOO

Ever since my early childhood, I've been suffering from being overweight and eventually from having morbid obesity. I have tried every possible diet in the world like many other patients who have been struggling with obesity.

Dieting seemed to work well for a short period of time.

Unfortunately, my body fought back to compensate for the weight loss and I would end up gaining back the lost weight with some additional kilo's.

In 2017, in my early forties, I was diagnosed with type II diabetes mellitus. My doctor suggested that I consider gastric bypass surgery.

Although my weight was over 123 kilos, I have a height of 1.66 meters, I thought there were people in need of this surgery more than I.

However, I started thinking about it and eventually decided to have surgery. After all, my quality of life and overall health would improve.

In September 2017, I had my gastric bypass surgery and lost about 50 kilos in 9 months. Immediately after surgery I was able to stop taking my diabetes medication! Now, I walk about 70 km a week without getting short of breath or having pain in my knees or lower back, my new life started from that moment on.

People even started treating me differently. This was a huge surprise for me, as I felt that I was the same "me", only in a thinner shell.

About 18 months ago, my physician





(Ömrüm Aydin) asked me to become a representative/member of our Dutch Patient Association.

Besides my job in a pharmacy, I run a household with 2 kids going through puberty. Nonetheless, with great pleasure I like to do my utmost best for our association. I want to contribute as a representative and provide support to other patients who suffer from obesity and learn more about this disease.

Together fighting against the biases on obesity!

Erman Akpınar, Chief Financial Officer of NVOO

Working as a former surgical resident in a specialized bariatric center, I came in contact with many people struggling with obesity in their lives.

Although these people could undergo bariatric surgery to lose their excess weight and strive for a better quality of life, they have to be supported for a lifetime. Thus, obesity must be treated as a chronic disease, with ongoing regular contacts to build-in supportive moments for people who need a little extra.

Currently, I am doing a Ph.D. in bariatric surgery with a topic on nationwide improvements in outcomes, using the Dutch Audit for Treatment of Obesity. A mandatory nationwide audit including all bariatric procedures being performed in the Netherlands.

The audit made clear how important it is to monitor the outcomes, and improve the quality of care in a never-ending cycle.

Having a national platform is a place where everyone can gather, change thoughts, have discussions, and unite. However, people living with obesity do not have this platform. Therefore, together with an amazing dedicated team, I committed myself to launch the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Overgewicht en Obesitas (NVOO).

Making it possible for people with obesity to gather, unite, discuss topics, ask questions, and help each other in an evidence-based and peer-supported community.

Altogether, in the Netherlands there are many small initiatives trying to solve a smaller piece of a bigger puzzle. Every effort, small or large is important and should be acknowledged; we support that fully!

However, we are still missing a national organization bringing our community together. Having an established national advoca-

cy can have an immense positive impact. We want to get support and awareness for our community.

Also, we need to be involved in healthcare guidelines, insurance policies, new research projects and much more... Therefore, it has become our mission to start a movement to bring this community together.

Our new Dutch association: Nederland-

se Vereniging voor Overgewicht en Obesitas (NVOO), will go live in 2022 with an amazing platform to give our people a voice!

Stay posted, you will hear from us very soon!

*Ömrüm Aydin, MD  
Chair of Dutch Association for people living with obesity*





## LUXEMBOURG



**M**y name is Hanen Samouda. I am Tunisian, living in Luxembourg.

I am a clinical anthropologist and epidemiologist, working as a researcher in obesity and body composition at the Luxembourg Institute of Health since 2005.

I had my Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Biological Anthropology in 2007, on “obesity, biometry and perceptions” at the University of Aix-Marseille, France, Department of Anthropology, in collaboration with the Department of Endocrinology, Metabolic Diseases and Nutrition. Hôpital Nord, Marseille.

The focus of my research activities is mainly on the development of easy to use tools to diagnose obesity through body composition, as well as the establishment of specific obesity treatment programs, which enables a personalised approach for obesity management.

In this context, I recently developed a “Visceral Fat Calculator” for adults, an online tool providing an accurate 1-3 and easy evaluation of the visceral fat depot, major risk factors for several chronic conditions, independently of the general obesity: [visceralfatcalculator.lih.lu](http://visceralfatcalculator.lih.lu)

This calculator is accessible online for



everyone, and is useful to monitor visceral fat.

I am also currently developing a paediatric obesity management registry, in collaboration with the Paediatric Endocrinology Department, Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg.

My other topics of interest as a researcher include the obesity paradox and metabolically (un)healthy weight, as well as the role played by body composition in the development of chronic diseases.

I also live with obesity, and have done sin-

ce my childhood.

With colleagues and friends from Luxembourg, we are currently establishing a national obesity association for the patient's advocacy and representation. We need to address the rights of people living with obesity to be treated with respect, without weight discrimination, with access to evidence-based treatment resources, among others.

Through knowledge dissemination, education and a patient-centred research, we aim to address obesity as a complex multifactorial disease with its several root causes.

I am very happy to join the European Coalition for People living with Obesity, ECPO, a very enthusiastic and energetic team.

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**M**y name is Lis Muller  
I come from Luxembourg, and I have been working for 40 years in the Thermal Cure Center of Mondorf, in the interest of people affected by obesity.

As a dietician, I have developed activities where the curists could experience healthy food in a positive way, to create specific and savourous healthy plates, with team cooking, visits to a herb garden, and to help associate pleasure and mindful eating ...

I am a graduate in Patient Therapeutic Education (University of Geneva), and was for 15 years, the head of the Nutrition Department of the Cure Center.



The team includes doctors, physiotherapists and psychologists, and all see each pa-

tient with their own particular life story and specific needs in relation with their complex disease.

I trained the therapists to be able to listen and have a better understanding of the patient, and have supported efforts to provide a global and personalised quality of treatments.

With my experience with patients suffering from obesity, the collaboration with official bodies and entities within the media, I am motivated to help instigate, together with colleagues, friends and patients, a national association for people living with obesity.

With pleasure, I am looking forward to joining with the European Coalition for People living with Obesity.



## FEDERICO LUIS MOYA



**I am FEDERICO LUIS MOYA from SPAIN. ASOCIACIÓN BARIÁTRICA HÍSPALIS NACIONAL, ASOCIACIÓN DE PERSONAS QUE VIVEN CON OBESIDAD. I live in Santander, a City in Northern Spain. For 18 years of my life, I fought obesity, until I made the decision to have surgery in 2014. After eight years of daily cognitive work, I have maintained a body mass index that does not generate comorbidities associated with my chronic disease.**

After eight years of daily cognitive work, I have maintained a body mass index that does not generate comorbidities associated with my chronic disease.

It is important to note that obesity is never cured, and that it is important to take care of the health of people who at some point in their lives have lived with obesity.

From the moment I had surgery, I saw the need to empower patients in the fight for evidence-based treatment and the need that obesity patients have for obesity to be recognized in our country as a CHRONIC AND MULTIFACTORIAL DISEASE.

For all these reasons, I have been involved in the defence of patients living with obesity for several years.

I am the Executive Director of the Association.

My role involves the information on prevention and control of obesity and comorbidities, their consequences and work to achieve that obesity is recognised as a CHRONIC DISEASE.

We Inform and support people living with obesity, we support family, friends and relatives, and ultimately any group or person that requires information about this disease.

We create support and information groups for patients of bariatric surgery, or patients who are in treatment for patients seeking intervention.

We structure, organise and coordinate activities in collaboration with the respective responsible medical centres.

We carry out projects, coordinate activities, and sign collaboration agreements with public and private entities in order to carry out training and information days on issues related to food and healthy lifestyle habits, which are mainly activities aimed at the prevention of obesity.

The organisation of recreational and leisure activities aimed at people in a situation of social exclusion which is due to morbid obesity.

My guardian angel is a Bariatric Surgeon. Because I found a doctor with empathy and an understanding of obesity, I managed to have bariatric surgery, and because of this, I am now able to re-tie my own shoelaces.

I managed to lose 100 kilos in 365 days, and today, I now have 2 little dogs that I love.





## RECIPE

### WATERMELON PIZZA

#### INGREDIENTS:

- \* Watermelon
- \* 1/4 of a cup of blueberries
- \* 1/4 of a cup of strawberries.
- \* 1/4 of a cup of almond flakes.
- \* 1/3 of a cup of plain greek yogurt.
- \* 1 tablespoon of honey.

#### METHOD

Using a sharp knife, cut off a slice of watermelon down the middle about 1 inch thick as your pizza base. In a separate bowl, mix the Greek yogurt and honey together until it is smooth.

When you are ready to serve, drizzle the yogurt onto the watermelon. Top with the fresh fruits and the almond flakes.

Additionally, Pomegranate seeds are absolutely fantastic as well for extra toppings.



## RECIPE

### ALMOND BUTTER & DATE PROTEIN BALLS

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 7 or 8 dates chopped in a blender,
- 2/3 tbs of almond butter,
- 1 tbs of peanut butter,
- 1 tbs of protein powder,
- 2 tbs of almond flour if you would like,
- 1 pinch of sea salt.
- 1 dl cream
- pinch of salt

#### METHOD

Mix all of the ingredients together.

Once mixed together, make sure to wash your hands thoroughly and form the mixture into balls. Coat the balls in the desiccated coconut or almond flour.

If you wish, the protein balls can be stored in an air tight container for over week in a fridge.



# CHRISTMAS IN MY COUNTRY





# Switzerland

## Eurobesitas



**I**n 2021 Eurobesitas created a film which was named “COURAGE” The film highlighted the stigmatisation that patients can face in a healthcare setting.

This 7 minute video received an Award by EASO and the European Coalition for People living with Obesity (ECPO), for Best Public Engagement Programme, and is available to watch on the website [www.eurobesitas.org](http://www.eurobesitas.org)

The university hospitals in Switzerland along with the universities and medical schools have chosen to present the video to health care staff and doctors as well as to medical students in order to fight stigma in the health care settings.

On March 4th 2021, we were lucky enough

to be able to present the actions of the ECPO, the WOD and our film on the Swiss television news and in several articles in well-known newspapers.

The film was also disseminated via our Facebook page and our YouTube channel throughout Europe, as we have a translation in French, English and German.

As well as this, our main actress of the “Courage” video, Céline, who is a member of the Eurobesitas Committee, was interviewed on Swiss TV news on the subject of stigmatisation, on the actions of Eurobesitas and ECPO

We are currently shooting our next film for the WOD on 4 March 2022. This film's focus is about how to deal with stigma in 4 steps through workshops according to Jeffrey

Sobal.

This will be very useful for people living with obesity, but also for health care professionals.

In the Eurobesitas Association, we act and fight against stigmatisation and therefore we were able to produce this poster against stigmatisation.

It was published in various newspapers and supports our actions.

Eurobesitas has been working closely with the Federal Office of Public Health on a number of issues.

The development of a multidisciplinary gold standard program for the management of obesity in adults, with the aim of reimbursement by health insurance companies and, more generally, the improvement of the ma-





nagement of obesity at national level.

The voice of the patients has been heard and we are currently continuing the project through Swiss Alliance Obesity (ALLOB).

The University Hospital of Lausanne (CHUV) has decided to undertake a large-scale project, to adapt and improve the care of patients with severe obesity, they have committed to adapt all the equipment for these patients, the scanner, the MRI, and other radiological instruments as well as the examination tables, or tables for surgical operations, the scales and all the relevant medical equipment.

In addition, they also plan to train all their health care staff on the subject of obesity in order to drastically reduce stigma.

The CHUV has called on Eurobesitas several times to find out what the patients' needs and wishes are, and has even involved them in training workshops for the care staff.

Eurobesitas is fully involved, and an important part of this project.

The Public Administration of the Canton of Geneva has decided to improve the care of patients living with obesity and to reduce

the stigma that these patients can suffer, as a result of this, they have interviewed me as President of Eurobesitas as well as this, several members of our Association are actively involved in this project. They have visited this administration several times for very productive meetings.

During the Annual Swiss Association for the Study of Obesity, (ASEMO) Symposium at the University of Bern, Eurobesitas was able to present the Eurobesitas Association and ECPO, our actions for World Obesity Day 2021 and our actions with ECPO for the People First Campaign day, on the 21st of October, as well as the ECPO website.

With more than 500 doctors and health care professionals involved, we are pleased to say that they were very interested, and visited our sites with great enthusiasm.

Eurobesitas is also involved in the development of several practical tools within the French association of patients living with obesity, Fedmind.

We have also been asked to give a lecture on hypnosis and obesity with a self-hypnosis

exercise. This lecture is online, on our Facebook page as well as on the Fedmind website.

Patients can try self-hypnosis to reduce stress before meals for example. During this conference I taught patients how to perform a self-hypnosis session.

One of the aims of Eurobesitas is to have obesity recognized as a disease. We have already had contact with some parliamentarians, and we continue our political activity within the ALLOB.

In 2021, Eurobesitas has been invited to be involved with 4 TV shows to talk about our actions and the ECPO on stigma.

Our association participated in the evaluation of the patients' perspective of a very interesting study that NOVO intends to carry out in Switzerland on the patients' view of obesity and its management compared to that of health professionals.

Eurobesitas has also been asked to give courses to physiotherapists on obesity, patient needs and stigma





## Slovakia SKLON



**P**resident of SKLON, Hana Vrabcová would like to thank the ECPO for their support during the past year.

The highlights of the year for our organisation were Obesity Prevention Week for World Obesity Day. This included a webinar with experts for patients “What do we know about obesity?”

Using our website and Facebook pages, we organised numerous events during the weeks leading up to World Obesity Day, including free-of-charge activities in cooperation with the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic (ÚVZ SR), the Slovak Society of Practical Obesitology (SSPO), the University of Health and Social Work of Saint Elisabeth, the Slovak Nordic Walking Association, STOB lecturers, Phoenix zdravotnícke zásobovanie a.s., Kompava Company, and sports instructors.

We were honoured to win a joint ECPO Award for the Best Patient Engagement Programme.

We were delighted with the publication of a translation book by D. Durrer, Y. Schutz Obesity Management for Physicians.

We joined in the creation of Europe's first Image Bank to address stigma in the media through positive imagery of people who live with obesity in Slovakia.

For 2022 we will continue to focus on the recognition of obesity as a disease, we will work towards a change in state policy in the care of patients with obesity and raising awareness of obesity prevention in the population.

### LIEČBA OBEZITY

pre lekárov primárnej starostlivosti a internistov

Dominique Durrer

Yves Schutz



**RMS**  
EDITIONS





# Italy

## AMICI OBESI



**I**t has been a very special year for everyone, but despite the difficulties due to the anti-covid measures (such as social distancing, online events etc.) we continued with our work.

Despite this, we continue to give support and information online through our Facebook groups. We started again with our self-help groups in person in some Italian cities such as Milan, Bergamo, Palermo, Turin ... with the hope that many other groups throughout Italy will start up.

We do not stop in the fight against the social and clinical stigma on obesity. This year we presented a beautiful project. A travelling photographic exhibition also collected and shown in a book called "CHIAVE DI SVOLTA": which shows stories and paths of people with obesity, who lay bare their personal stories and how they changed their lives.

In November 2019, the motion that committed the government to recognize obesity as a real disease, to make a national health plan, and fight the social and clinical stigma against people with obesity was approved in the Italian Parliament, unanimously.

Covid has unfortunately slowed us down a bit, but we are confident that the Government has positively welcomed this commitment and will make its contribution, thus improving the lives of people with obesity and guaranteeing an adequate treatment path for each individual patient.

There is a lot of work still to do, but we have gained a great first step.

We will never give up !!

The next commitment of AMICI OBESI is the traveling tour of the photographic exhibition created together with the photographic book. We will touch the cities of the protagonists to show everyone how obesity is to be looked at with different eyes, people who have experienced obesity or who still live with it are people who must be respected and not stigmatized.

<https://www.facebook.com/amiciobesi>

<http://www.amiciobesi.it/>



**"Mi hanno chiuso molte porte  
per la mia obesità.  
Oggi, finalmente, mi voglio bene!"**

*"A lot of doors has been closed to me because of my obesity. Now, at last, I love myself". Diana.*



**"Non mi sono mai sentita  
in sintonia con il mio corpo.  
Occorre lavorare molto anche**

*"I've never felt in tune with my body. A lot of work needs to be done on the psychological aspect." Iris.*



## Germany



### TOGETHER all 3 organisations in Germany...

We, together launched campaign “Dick & Du” within BAG- all 3 patient organisations also worked closely together for World Obesity day on the 4th of March 2021.

The Campaign seeks more understanding and tolerance

The “Dick und DU” campaign would not have been possible without the courage and openness of those affected. By providing an insight into their personal stories, they set a clear signal for more understanding and tolerance.

Although obesity has officially been recognized as a chronic disease, in large parts of our society it is still unfortunately seen as a consequence of a lack of character. With “Dick und DU”, the Federal Working Group on Self-Help Adiposity (BAG) is launching a thought-provoking campaign on the subject of obesity.

See more here - <https://dick-und-du.de/>

#gegenstigmatisierung #gegenvorurteile  
#gediskriminierung

# Dick und DU

Hilf dabei, Vorurteile abzubauen.

Adipositas ist eine Krankheit, von der rund 16 Millionen Deutsche betroffen sind. Viele dieser Menschen leiden unter Diskriminierung und Stigmatisierung – und wünschen sich Verstehen, Verständnis, Hilfe.

Mehr Informationen: [www.dick-und-du.de](http://www.dick-und-du.de)

BAG Selbsthilfe Adipositas

### Adipositasverband

Some of our highlights of 2021, by Marion Rung-Friebe in Adipositasverband!

- We continue to work on the guidelines for the disease of obesity, which are currently being reviewed in Germany. This is an ongoing commitment, to which we are determined.
- We were happy to participate in various specialist congresses, and helped to provide information about the disease of Obesity
- We offered a large number of video conferences for those affected with obesity, but additionally we were happy to also offer these video conferences to those that are specialists in this field.
- We held several seminars throughout the year, to assist and support the management of self-help groups. We have also encouraged and promoted networking amongst each other.
- I am grateful to have the opportunity to regularly provide information about the disease of obesity in a small special-interest programme called “HealthTV” where I invite guests and interview them about their knowledge and experiences. The whole thing is then shown on television and aired on different social media platforms.
- We entered into a joint campaign with all members of the ECPO, and finally, we have an accessible image database that shows people living with obesity, as they are, living their lives.





## AdipositasHilfe Deutschland e.V.

Meanwhile over in **AdipositasHilfe Deutschland e.V.** Michael Wirtz reports on their highlights for the year 2021

### Treatment of Obesity

Due to a new law, the Federal Joint Committee (<https://www.g-ba.de/english/>) has started to develop a Disease Management Program. This must be developed by the middle of 2023. Our Member of the Board, Michael Wirtz, is an accredited patient representative on the panel

### Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases

We are a member of the think tank im.Puls cardiovascular disease, which develops policy recommendations to help reduce the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases in our society. Obesity is a high priority here. We are proud to be a founding member of the Heart-Brain Alliance, which supports projects for the prevention of heart disease.

### Digitalisation in the Health Sector

In the digitalisation of the health care system, it is possible for the first time in Germany, to use digital therapy services. We are in dialogue with providers and also with politicians in order to represent the needs of patients accordingly.

### 10 online events on the causes and consequences of the disease of obesity

#### Publication of some events on our YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/c/AdipositasHilfeDeutschlandeV>



## AcSD e.V.

We organised the very 1st German Obesity Camp

2 days, including 30 sessions, with 59 patient group leaders from all over Germany, barcamp style (un-)conference, with lots of networking and face to face interaction, AcSD e.V. in cooperation with Adipositasverband

- We organised 3 Obesity days, one virtual/two hybrid, with up to 250 participants
- We are proud to have contributed to the ECPO Image Bank
- We have started to work on the German Obesity Guidelines
- This led us to meet several federal and local politicians
- We raised our voice at scientific meetings and made sure we were heard! (mostly virtual though)

## Ireland ICPO



**H**ighlights of the year for ICPO included our WOD on-line event, which included 20 HCPs and 50 People Living with Obesity.

This collaboration between ASOI and ICPO, resulted in us being awarded “joint winners” of the EASO Award for the Best Collaborative Project 2021

Following research results of high levels of stigma in undergraduate Irish physiotherapy students, the ICPO formed the Obesity Stigma Education for All Committee, representing all the multi disciplines and colleges from around Ireland.

The mission of the committee, under the governance of the ASOI going forward, is to see stigma education added to the curriculum for all healthcare graduates.

A major highlight was working with the HSE National Clinical Programme to review the new Irish Model of Care which was launched last march, and also to help improve training and education for HCPs on obesity.

As one of the 12 countries to join the new ECPO image bank, we ourselves had 25 models volunteer to be photographed, and we

are so excited to be part of such a powerful campaign.

Our plans for 2022 are to continue with public awareness and addressing stigma

through student talks, the progression of our image bank, and annual campaigns and conferences.





## Portugal



**N**ational Day for Obesity, Portugal 22nd May 2021 sees the launch of the book “O Esconderijo” between Adexo and APCOI.

This beautiful book was created with the support of Vanessa Oliveira and Jose Carlos Malata, to support children who are bullied, and to create awareness with peers, parents and teachers on the damage created by bullying related to obesity.

In further developing news, negotiations with the Parliament and the Government to obtain the reimbursement of medicines for the treatment of obesity whilst a law was passed for ‘The Right to be Forgotten.’

Insurance companies in Portugal are now obliged to accept life or health insurance for people with chronic illnesses who have done something to reduce or to overcome the risk of their illness.

This is tremendous news for people who live with obesity and have been previously refused. Now once they are engaged to treat or manage their obesity, they have the right to have life or health insurance.



## Spain

ASOCIACIÓN BARIÁTRICA HÍSPALIS NACIONAL,  
DE PERSONAS QUE VIVEN OBESIDAD



**A**s a newly formed organisation representing people who live with obesity in Spain, we look forward to the continued support given by ECPO.

Specifically in learning best practice in respect to fundraising, how to approach possible alliances, how to create successful conversations with people living with obesity and how to get more people to become engaged in the cause.

Some highlights of our year included events that were held in September, November and December with Presenta, Victoria Buiza alongside Javier Salvador, Irene Breton, and Bernardo Rea, respectively.

Another highlight of our past year, was taking part in the creation of the ECPO People First Image Bank.



As one of 12 European countries to take part, we were excited and honoured to be included.

Some of the challenges we found during the year was the translation of materials that are valuable for our use, and we aim to create more Spanish written material in 2022.

We also look forward to strengthening and building our organisation, and adding more people to the cause and creating momentum for the work that we do.

Plans for 2022 include organising a conference on the psychology of obesity and the creation of a video – “What is ABHispalis?”

We will work to empower people living with obesity with support groups, participation in forums and self-esteem courses to name only a few plans.

Our overall aim as an association, is how we can better support the evidence-based treatment of a person living with obesity.



# Christmas, my favorite season



Bjargey Ingólfssdóttir

**S**ince I was a little girl, Christmas has always been my favorite season.

I really love all the Christmas lights, joyful Christmas songs and gingerbread cookies.

In Iceland, where I live, Christmas time is usually very cold and covered with snow. People love to go out in the snow, skiing and riding sleighs with their children.

I love decorating my home for the holidays,

I love to use green Cyprus branches and eucalyptus to have that natural Christmas feeling inside. I always have buxus branches in vases around the house and it makes the home feel so festive.



Every year we decorate our Christmas tree with lights and sparkly ornaments.

The day before Christmas Eve we put the presents under the tree and after dinner on Christmas Eve we open the presents together.

During the holidays our family love to have time to relax and we watch Christmas movies together, read books, and we also love to do a puzzle and play cards.

One of our favorite Christmas traditions is to go to downtown Reykjavík to go ice skating and take a look at all the beautiful Christmas lights, then we go to one of our favorite restaurants in Iceland, Jómfrúin, and have some of the delicious food that they prepare specially for Christmas every year.

*I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2022.*



Our family has many Christmas traditions, and one of them is to make our own Icelandic Leaf Bread.

All family members participate in making the Leaf Bread.

First we need to cut in the dough geometric patterns, then the bread is deep-fried and saved to be eaten as an accompaniment to Christmas dinner. Traditionally, a special tool called a leaf bread iron is used to cut the patterns.

We love to bake cookies for Christmas and we usually make more than we can actually eat so we love to make little gift boxes with cookies for friends and family. People love to have homemade cookies and a glass of milk, so this little present makes people very happy when we bring it to their house.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMANITY

## MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING AS SEEN BY THE PATIENT

### MOTIVATION



**Katja Schläppi**

Founder and President of Perceptio Cibus  
[www.perceptiocibus.org](http://www.perceptiocibus.org)



**O**n social networks, characterised by the massive publication of photos, the individual is in visual contact with a variety of bodies whose appearance triggers an emotion in them.

The aesthetics of a slim body, an indisputable value in our society today, is on display everywhere and constitutes the “gold standard” for pleasing, seducing and succeeding professionally, guaranteeing excellent health, success and power. However, the way we look at our bodies is closely linked to the prejudices held against people who are considered to be overweight or with obesity.

In our present society, we live with many constraints, various demands are placed upon us, we are told what to do, profitability and the feeling of consumption, where the human being is forgotten, where we are not allowed to be who or what we truly are....

We can get lost in this, because a lot of manipulations take place at many levels, such as stereotypes concerning health, appearance, the way of being, the food we eat etc. This also goes as far as human relations, where we are asked to function according to potentially harmful criteria, without allowing the other person to be what he or she is in his or her entirety, while being respected and not judged, while remaining in a spirit of kindness.

It is essential to educate not only the population, but also the different professions to once again connect with the essential human values such as harmony and balance, empathy, respect and an unconditional positive outlook in order to move forward together in synergy towards the revaluation of the human being and to take this into account in his or her journey towards health and well-being.

We should take every aspect of the persons

own needs, on their own merits. Not look to old stereotypes, and to look at thinking of new ways in dealing with that problem. Not just automatically consider the old mindsets, but to be forward thinking while remaining empathetic.

Within our organisation “Perceptio Cibus” in Switzerland, which is an association for the support of people living with obesity ([www.perceptiocibus.org](http://www.perceptiocibus.org)), we have, from the beginning, integrated a charter of values along these lines and we have finally been able to share our experiences as people affected by obesity, to bring our expertise and experience in the context of a training course in case management.

We were also able to give our point of view in the context of motivational interviewing as seen by the patient. Our intervention was a success and we were able to bring out the essential points in the meeting between resource persons and accompanying persons (paramedical staff) in case management.

With time, we will widen our field of action.

What is marvellous is to have been able to put forward that we are people with values, who have the right to be respected and valued, and to bring humanism into this training where, initially, the human being is at the centre of care in a chronic illness.

What really happens is that the people trained are conditioned by a multitude of information and theoretical techniques which consequently distance them from the essential expertise of the person concerned by a chronic disease such as ours, which is obesity, including a multitude of comorbidities depending on the case...

The conclusion of Perceptio Cibus is not only to network, but also to manetworks and the general public will be our future challenge.



# CHRISTMAS IN MY COUNTRY



Vicki Mooney



Carlos Oliveira



Sólveig Sigurðardóttir



Dominique Durrer





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